



Catherine E. Pugh
Mayor

**COMMISSION FOR
HISTORICAL & ARCHITECTURAL
PRESERVATION**

Tom Liebel, Chairman

STAFF REPORT



Thomas J. Stosur
Director

June 12, 2018

REQUEST: Construct five new three-story rowhouses

ADDRESSES: 41 & 43 S. Arlington Avenue and 1101, 1103, & 1105 Hollins Street (Union Square Historic District)

PETITIONER(S): South Arlington, LLC, Owner
Adam Carballo, Architect

STAFF: Walter W. Gallas, AICP

RECOMMENDATION: Concept approval of height, scale, and massing, with plans to return to Commission for final approval of design details

SITE/HISTORIC DISTRICT

General Area: 41 & 43 S. Arlington Avenue, a vacant lot, is located in the Union Square Historic District at the northeast corner of S. Arlington Avenue and Boyd Street. 1101, 1103, & 1105 Hollins Street is also a vacant lot just across S. Arlington Avenue at the corner of S. Arlington and Hollins Streets on the south side of Hollins Market (*Images 1-3*). The Union Square local historic district is a dense area of rowhouses and commercial structures located in Southwest Baltimore. Two major features define the district: Union Square Park, a donation to the city in the 1840s, and Hollins Market with the city's oldest market building. Generally bounded by South Schroeder, West Pratt, South Fulton, and West Baltimore Streets, the area of approximately 21 blocks is comprised of over 1,000 buildings. The district is built on a hierarchical street-grid system laid down over gently sloping terrain by engineer-surveyor Thomas H. Poppleton following the land's 1816 annexation to the city.

Site Conditions – 41, 43 S. Arlington Avenue

The existing property is a vacant corner lot. It has a recycled iron fence on the Arlington Avenue side, and a wooden board fence on the Boyd Street side. In the former party wall of the neighboring property at 39 S. Arlington, wooden stairs with landing have been constructed leading to a second floor entrance. These stairs are likely on the property of 41 S. Arlington Avenue, which is a historic two-story-plus-attic house (*Image 4-5*). It is not known from the CHAP files when the two buildings on this site were demolished. The 1971 Sanborn map showed two three-story dwellings on this property (*Image 6*). By July 1985 the buildings were gone (*Image 7*). The previous buildings dated to the late 19th century, appearing in the 1890 Sanborn map as part of a row of three-story stores along S. Arlington Avenue with two-story rear appendages (*Image 8*).

Site Conditions – 1101, 1103, 1105 Hollins Street

These addresses are also vacant lots. In 1980, the house at 1105 Hollins—which was set back from the street—was demolished due to fire damage, leaving two empty lots between 1103 Hollins and the former comfort station at 1109-1111 Hollins Street (*Images 9 & 10*). In 2000, 1101 and 1103 Hollins Street collapsed while under renovation and were demolished (*Image 11*). The business, which was in the first floor of both buildings at the time of the collapse, was Glen and Nan's Beer Garden and Café. The 1890 Sanborn map shows these two three-story buildings at the corner, with the set-back house at 1105 (*Image 8*). Today a metal fence surrounds the lots on two sides, and it contains children's play equipment (*Image 12*).

BACKGROUND

41, 43 S. Arlington Avenue

June 21, 1985 – CHAP files show that a CHAP hearing was scheduled for July 12, 1985, to consider plans to construct new three-story buildings at this address. It is not shown in the file whether the application was heard or what its outcome was.

April 24, 2012 – Notice to Proceed issued to erect a wrought iron fence along S. Arlington Avenue and a wooden fence of the same height along Boyd Street.

1101-1103 Hollins Street

September 7, 1984 – Notice to Proceed to remove Formstone on 1103 Hollins Street.

December 20, 1986 – Notice to Proceed issued to replace wood windows on upper floors of 1103 Hollins Street to match existing.

February-April 2000 – Correspondence about work by owner without CHAP approval including installation of vinyl windows and steel door.

May 20, 2000 – 1101 and 1103 Hollins Street collapse while work was going on and after removal of load-bearing wall. Buildings demolished.

September 19, 2005 – Notice to Proceed issued to replace chain link fence with 5'-0" high steel picket fence.

1105 Hollins Street

June 24 1980 – Building ordered demolished due to fire damage.

September 11, 1984 – Notice to Proceed issued to construct brick garden wall (which was not constructed).

October 18, 1985 – Notice to Proceed issued to install temporary wood fence around property until construction of a building is completed, when brick wall will be constructed.

December 23, 1986 – Notice to Proceed issued for new vertical board wood fence around property instead of brick garden wall.

PROPOSAL

Applicant proposes to construct two new three-story rowhouses on the lots at 41, 43 S. Arlington Avenue, and three new three-story rowhouses on the lots at 1101, 1103, 1105 Hollins Street (*Images 13-17*).

APPLICATION OF GUIDELINES

- *2.1 Guiding Principles for New Construction:* The sites were cleared years ago and historic structures were lost, due to circumstances unrelated to this development plan. The designs are contemporary and in scale. The plans meet this guideline.
- *2.2 Site Design:* The plans meet this design guideline, constructing the houses to the front property lines with no setbacks, as is the pattern in the neighborhood.
- *2.3 Scale and Form:* The height and depth of the buildings are compatible with the height and depth of other buildings in the neighborhood overall, but the same facades don't work quite as well at both locations. On Arlington Avenue, the new buildings will directly abut two two-and-a-half story historic buildings. On Arlington Avenue in particular, the façade design could relate more effectively to the adjoining historic houses by perhaps lowering the first floor slightly and/or removing the belt courses. The rhythm of the window openings, due to the use of single-paned paired casement window in bays, differs from the neighborhood, and therefore the plans partially meet this guideline.
- *2.4.1 Building Entrances:* The front entrances with glass doors and with stoops are effective connectors to the street, and meet the design guidelines, but the heights of the doors and the transoms don't align with the tops of the windows.
- *2.4.2 Bay Windows:* The plans call for contemporary bay windows at each floor. This does not meet the design guidelines, which state: "Do not design new bay windows in neighborhoods where there is no historic precedent" and "Design new bay windows to be compatible with the length, height, and style of bay windows on surrounding buildings." Bay windows are not a design feature in Union Square rowhouses.
- *2.4.5 Roofs:* The proposed roofs are flat, which are compatible with the designs of surrounding buildings. The roof cornice detail needs to be worked out a bit more to relate to the cornice treatment at the tops of the bay windows. The plans partially meet the design guidelines.
- *2.5.1 Doors and Windows:* The proposed windows are casement windows topped at the first and second floors with varying sized transoms. The transoms seem unnecessary, especially at the upper floors, and they don't align with the other windows or tops of the doorways. The casement windows with large single panes appear as large voids in the facades. The more appropriate treatment would be one-over-one sash windows—which relate to window configurations throughout the neighborhood—and adding sills and lintels. In both locations, the end units—1101 Hollins and 43 S. Arlington—have only two windows, and these are at the first floor. Instead of using masonry detailing to suggest windows on this elevation, the design should include more actual windows, even though this might mean some reconfiguration of the floor plans. At the rear, the casement windows again look like great voids and would more appropriately be one-over-one sash windows. At the first and third floor, there is an unusual positioning of windows directly abutting a door, and the use of tiny windows aligned with no other window or door. The plans do not meet these guidelines.
- *2.5.2 Materials:* Discussions are not complete about all of the materials, other than understanding that masonry is proposed for the facades and the S. Arlington and Boyd Street elevations of the end units, and lap siding is proposed at the rear. Staff anticipates that the materials will meet these design guidelines.

NEIGHBORHOOD COMMENTS

The Union Square ARC and Hollins Roundhouse Neighborhood Association have received copies of the plans.

ANALYSIS

CHAP staff finds that the proposed new construction:

- Meets 2.1 *Guiding Principles for New Construction*;
- Meets 2.2 *Site Design*;
- Partially meets 2.3 *Scale and form*;
- Meets 2.4.1 *Building Entrances*;
- Does not meet 2.4.2 *Bay Windows*;
- Substantially meets 2.4.5 *Roofs*;
- Does not meet 2.5.1 *Doors and Windows*; and
- Meets 2.5.2 *Material*.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends concept approval of height, scale, and massing, with plans to return to Commission for final approval of design details. Staff recommends that the architect develop more fully:

- Alignment of tops of doors, transoms and windows, with elimination of transoms above first floors
- Relate cornices at top of bays to roof cornices
- An alternative to casement windows, such as one-over-one windows, include more windows at end unit street elevations, and rework window-door placement at rear elevations.
- Some modifications to facades, specific to 41, 43 S. Arlington Avenue plans, to relate more effectively to adjoining historic houses, such as lowering first floor slightly and/or removing belt courses.



Eric Holcomb
Director

MAP AND IMAGES

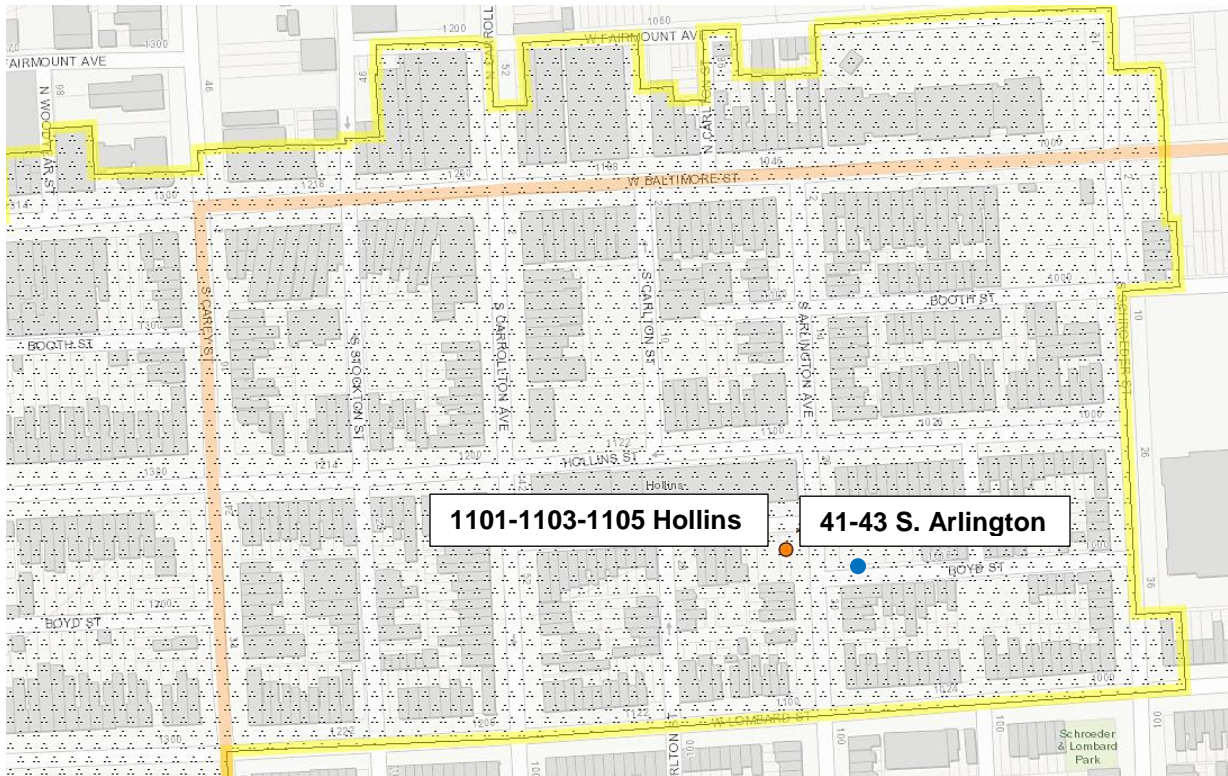


Image 1– 1101-1103-1105 Hollins Street (orange dot) and 41-43 S. Arlington Avenue (blue dot) in the Union Square Historic District (yellow outline).



Image 2: Aerial view of 41-43 S. Arlington Avenue (left) and 1101-1103-1105 Hollins Street (right) from north, December 2016



Image 3: Aerial view of 41-43 S. Arlington Avenue (lower) 1101-1103-1105 Hollins Street (upper) from east, December 2016



Image 4: 41-43 S. Arlington Avenue, June 2, 2018



Image 5: 41, 43 S. Arlington Avenue (right side lot), Google Street View August 2015

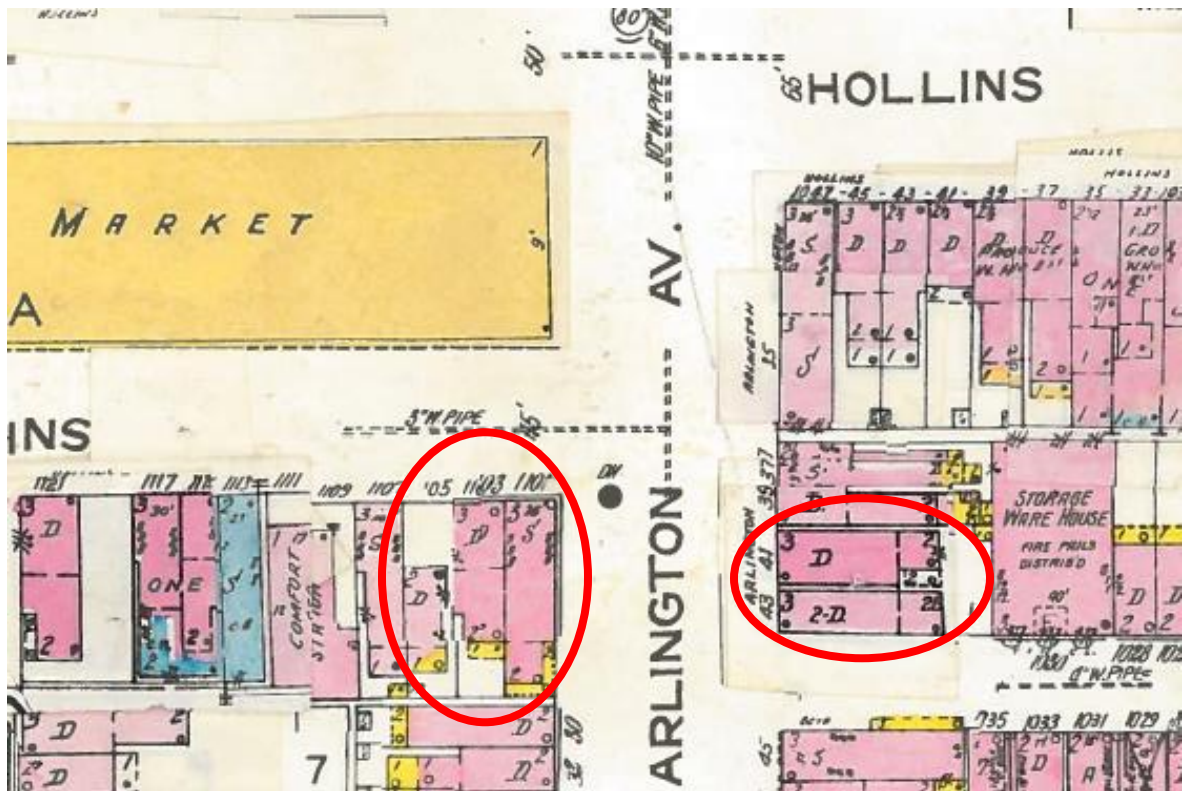


Image 6: 1971 Sanborn Map, 1101-1103-1105 Hollins Street (left), 41-43 S. Arlington Avenue (right)



Image 7: 41-43 S. Arlington Avenue (lot), July 1985

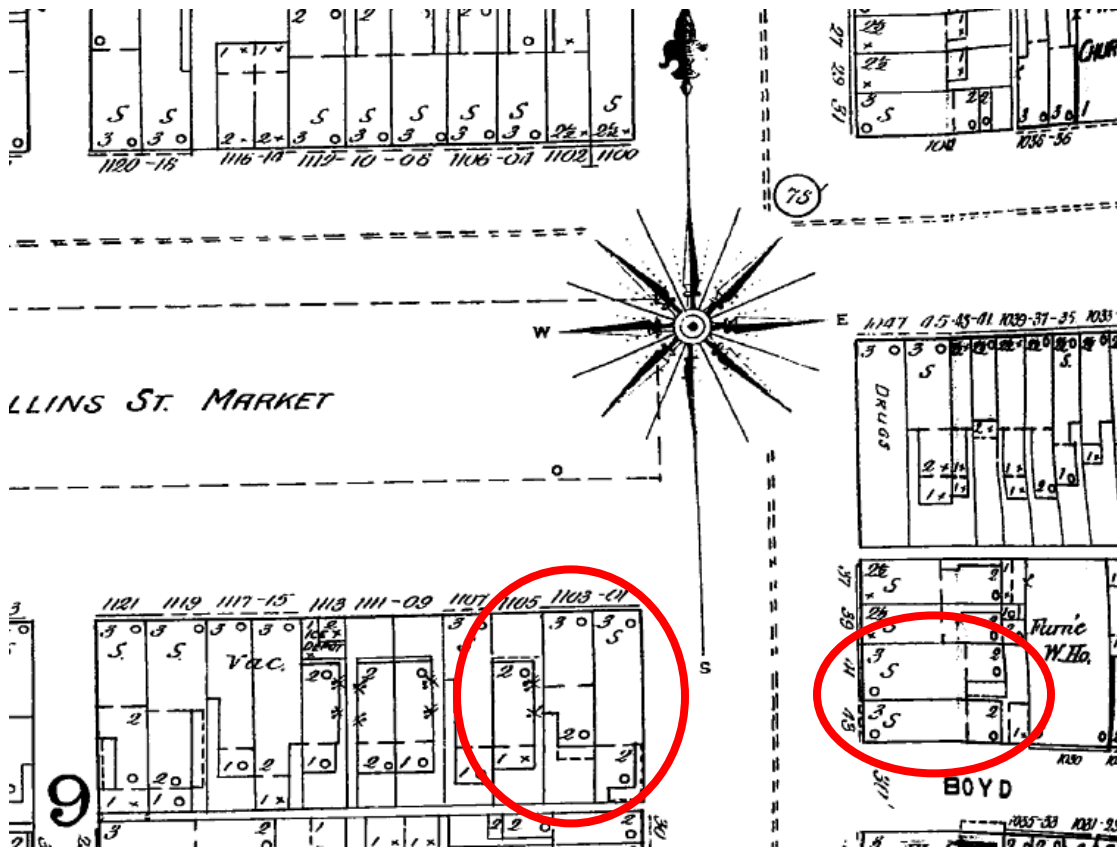


Image 8: 1890 Sanborn Map, 1101-1103-1105 Hollins Street (left), 41-43 S. Arlington Avenue (right)



Image 9: 1101, 1103 Hollins Street (left), July 1985



Image 10: 1101, 1103 Hollins Street, July 1985



Image 11: 1101-1103 Hollins Street, May 20, 2000



Image 12: 1101-1103-1105 Hollins Street, June 2, 2018

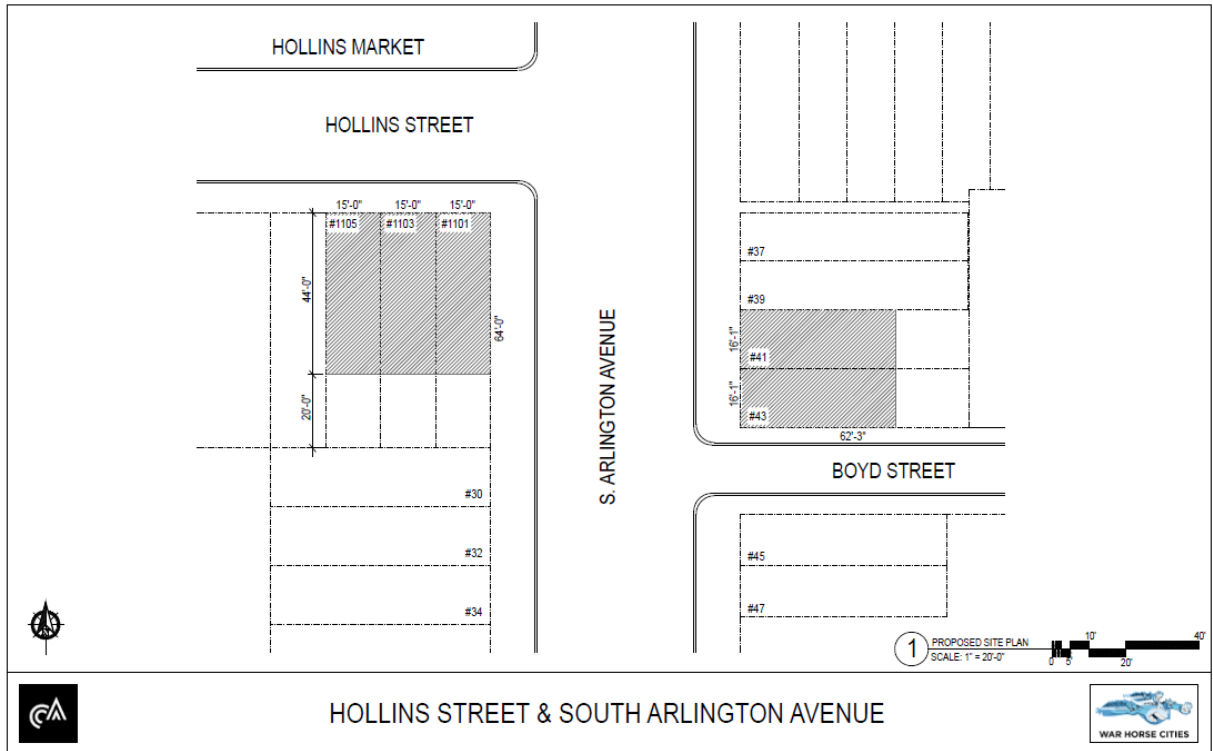


Image 13: Site Plan



Image 14: 1101-1103-1105 Hollins Street, front elevations

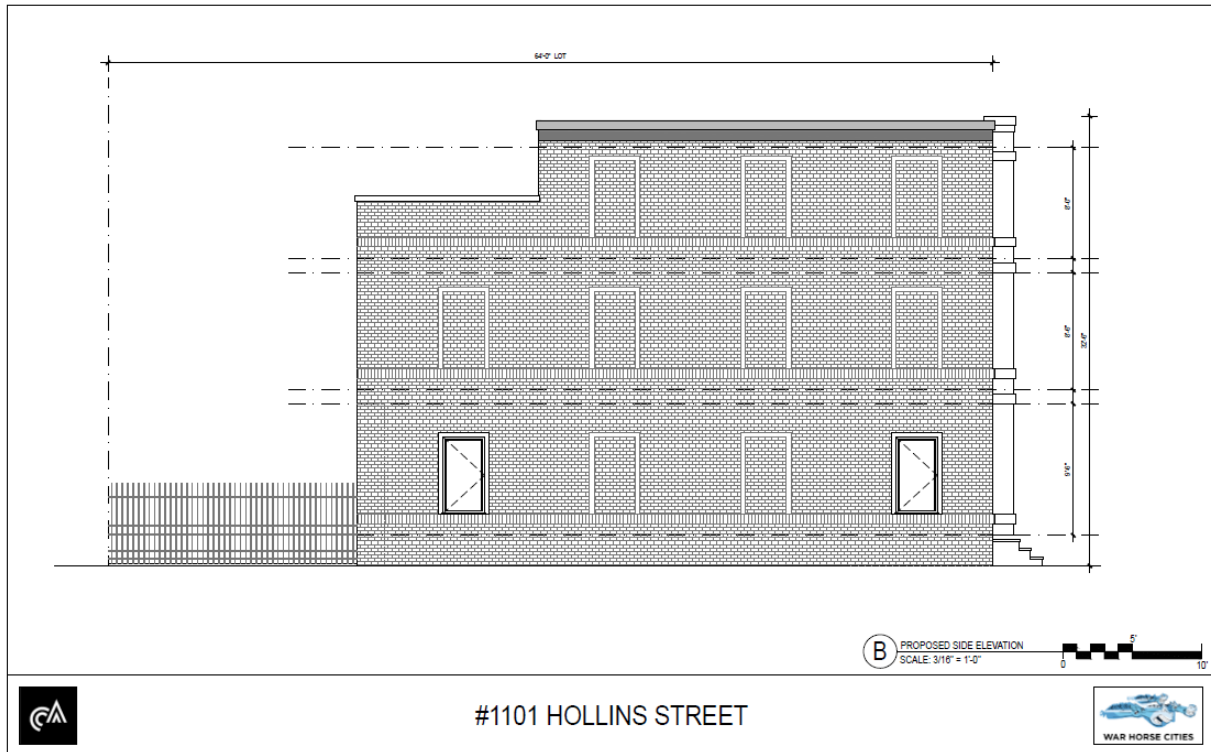


Image 15: 1101 Hollins Street, Arlington Avenue elevation



Image 16: 1101-1103-1105 Hollins Street, rear elevations



Image 17: 41, 43 S. Arlington Avenue, front elevations